

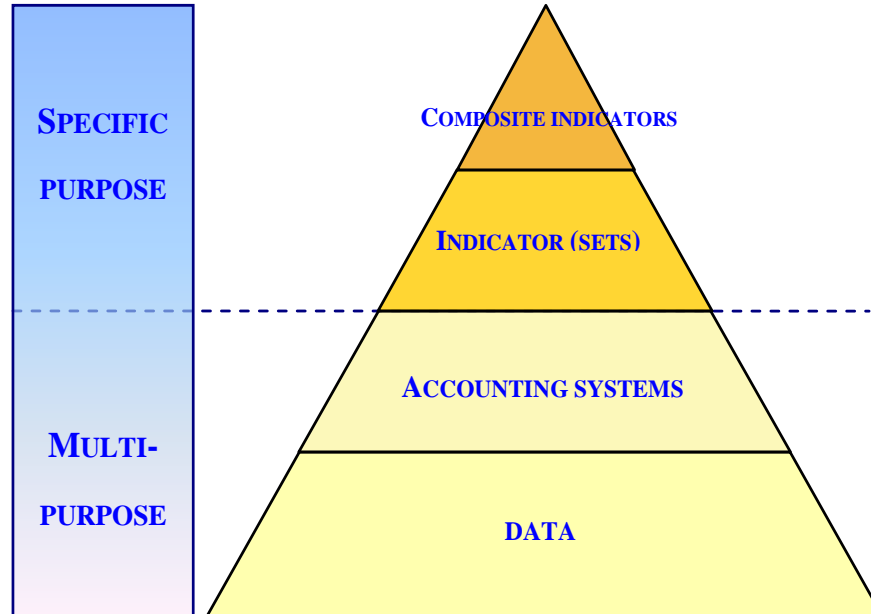


Literacy and Confidence:

The communication challenge of ESA 2010

Walter Radermacher
Director General, Eurostat

Statistical information infrastructure



ESA 2010

A major change in national accounts methodology

Of a type that only occurs every 15 years or so

Affects one of the fundamental sources of economic statistics

Based on 2008 SNA

→ Independent standard

→ Worldwide comparability

GDP in the EU

Wide impact on political sphere

- EU budget
- Structural funds
- EDP

Evidence based decision making

The communication challenges

Literacy

- Complexity of ESA2010
- Other changes introduced at the same time (statistical revisions, GNI guidelines)

Confidence

- Impacts could lead to a perception that the change is not only statistically motivated
- Quality assurance expected

Diversity of target audiences

Statisticians, professionals, think tanks, economists, etc.:

- understanding the changes and their origins

Decision makers and administrators:

- interpreting the results

Media:

- understanding the motivation, interpreting the consequences

And of course the public!

Target audience: Professionals and decision makers

Communication offer:

- Eurostat website
- Background material
- Training courses
- Webinars
- Conferences
- Seminars

Target audience: media

Media want to tell a story

Many misunderstandings

Some (deliberate) misinterpretation

Interest focuses on

- Drivers of change: “statistical manoeuvre...”
- Type of change: huge interest in illegal activities
- Effect and size of the changes: speculation, in particular illegal activities

The campaign – standard tools

- Technical briefing in January 2014
- Text box in news releases pre-announcing change
- Final ESA95 GDP news release - one page annex
- Mid October onwards – a series of first releases of data under ESA 2010

The campaign – support actions

- All answers to relevant media questions accompanied by standard statements repeating over and over again the same message (purpose, main features and main impact of the changes).
- A media friendly FAQ section on the website
- “Myths” tackled pro-actively
- Based on media interest, statements sent to all journalists on the mailing list

The campaign – social media

Weekly series of short video clips featuring Walter Radermacher and outside authorities

- Pierre Gramegna, Minister of Finance, Luxembourg
- Sven Giegold, MEP
- Brent Moulton, US Bureau of Economic Analysis
- Michael Davies, Australian Bureau of Statistics
- Prof. Enrico Giovannini, ex-OECD
- Prof. John Kay

Tweets on new material

Other challenges

Coordination with national communication activities

- Exchange of plans and experiences
- Standard statements for re-use

Lack of figures

- Most journalists want the numbers
- But before the release exact figures and even brackets not always available

Don't forget GDP and Beyond

Conclusions

Success may be too early to assess
We will know very shortly!

- 17 October: first ESA2010 GDP news release: comparison of annual data according to ESA95 and ESA2010; accompanying press briefing in Brussels
- 21 October: first ESA2010 debt and deficit notification: explanation of changes due to ESA2010; accompanying press briefing in Brussels